

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE LEASE OF  
15.142 ACRES TO CONSTRUCT A NEW  
MEADOWS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
ON  
FORT HOOD, TEXAS**

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS**

AQCR	Air Quality Control Region
AR	Army Regulation
BCWCID	Bell County Water Control Improvement District
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Emergency Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CU	Classification Unit
DNL	Day-Night Level
DOIM	Directorate of Information Management
EA	Environmental Assessment
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPCRA	Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act
KISD	Killeen Independent School District
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NOA	Notice of Availability
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
PCPI	Per Capita Personal Income
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
ROI	Region of Influence
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TPI	Total Personal Income
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USCB	U.S. Census Bureau
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), to addresses the potential effects, beneficial and adverse, associated with the proposed construction of a new Meadows Elementary School on Fort Hood, Texas. Fort Hood Military Reservation is a 217,300-acre U.S. Army installation located in Central Texas, approximately 58 miles due north of Austin and 39 miles southwest of Waco. Fort Hood is one of the Army's premier training installations, and a full range of mission-related training activities are conducted, including maneuver exercises for armored units up to brigade level, firing of live weapons, and aviation training. Fort Hood is the home of the U.S. Army's III Corps Headquarters (III Corps), 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized), and numerous other military commands.

Killeen Independent School District (KISD) currently has 6 elementary schools and 2 middle schools located on Fort Hood. KISD first took over the schools on Fort Hood in the 1960s, and has grown to support over 4800 Fort Hood students.

### **1.1 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

KISD, in cooperation with Fort Hood, proposes to construct a new Meadows Elementary School adjacent to the existing Meadows Elementary School on Fort Hood. The new facility will be approximately 114,000 square feet. The new lease of 15.142 acres will be located directly south and west of the current Meadows Elementary School, and includes a portion of the original 18.31 acre lease. See Figure 1-1 below:

Figure 1-1



The need for a new elementary school has arisen due to both the age of the old school and the growing student population. A newer school would replace the current Meadows Elementary School, which is becoming obsolete due to the fact that classrooms do not meet the current size standard. Further, a new school of the planned scope would increase student capacity availability when new housing is added in the area.

## 1.2 SCOPE OF THE DOCUMENT

This EA is being prepared in accordance with requirements of the NEPA (Public Law [PL] 91-190, 1969). NEPA requires Federal agencies to consider the environmental consequences of all proposed actions in their decision-making process. The intent of the

NEPA is to protect, restore, or enhance the environment through a well-informed decision-making process. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) was established under the NEPA to implement and oversee Federal policy in this process. U.S. Army Regulation (AR) 200-2, *Environmental Affects of Army Actions*, implements the CEQ regulations within the Army. This EA should provide sufficient evidence and analysis to inform decision-makers and the public of the likely environmental consequences of the alternatives.

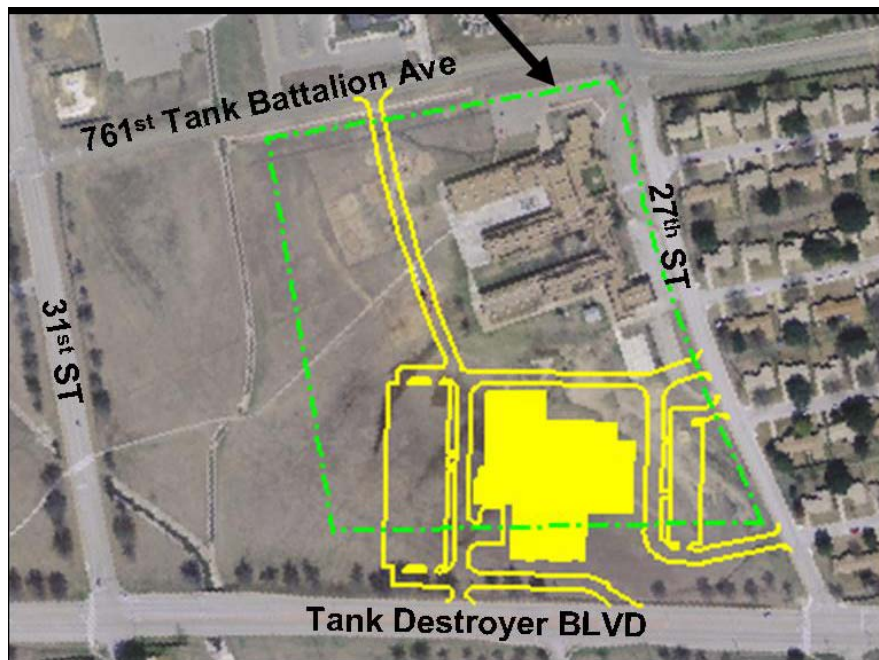
This EA identifies, documents, and evaluates the potential environmental effects of the proposed construction of a new Meadows Elementary School. Section 2.0 describes the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. Section 3.0 describes existing environmental conditions, and specifically the sites that could be affected by the alternatives. Section 4.0 identifies potential environmental effects that could occur upon implementation of the Proposed Action and the subsequent cumulative impacts.

## 2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In this section, the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative are considered. No other alternatives shall be considered based on the fact that there were no other viable alternatives for the placement of the new Meadows Elementary School.

### 2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, KISD proposes to lease 15.142 acres, for a period of 25 years, from Fort Hood in order to construct and operate a new Meadows Elementary School. The new school shall be sited just south of the current Meadows Elementary School, and will consist of 8.472 acres of the current lease footprint and 6.67 acres of newly leased Fort Hood property. Figure 2.1 depicts the proposed footprint of the new Meadows Elementary School. The green line indicates the current lease footprint. The proposed new lease area may be seen in Figure 1.1.



After the completion of construction of the new Meadows Elementary School, Fort Hood would like to reclaim the old Meadows Elementary School building, building 422, for use by the Directorate of Information Management (DOIM). DOIM would like to use the space for both administrative space and as a communications center.

### 2.2 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, KISD would continue to operate within their existing lease in the current Meadows Elementary School building. There would be no new lease and no construction of a new Meadows Elementary School.



### **3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

The affected environment is the baseline against which potential impacts caused by the proposed property lease are assessed. This section focuses on those resources and conditions that may be affected by activities resulting from the lease of land from Fort Hood by KISD, and the subsequent construction of a new Meadows Elementary School. Those resources present within the footprint of, and immediate area surrounding, the Proposed Action are included in this analysis; those resources that are either not present within the area, or would not be affected by the alternatives are not analyzed here.

Those resources eliminated from further study include groundwater, surface water, wetlands and waters of the U.S., floodplains, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resources.

Surface water, wetlands and waters of the U.S. and floodplains were eliminated due to the fact that none of these resources will be affected on the subject property. Groundwater, and the quality of nearby water bodies, will not be affected due to best management practices and construction management practices outlined in a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that shall be prepared for the construction site. The lease itself will have no impact on any waters.

Fish and wildlife were eliminated from further study due to their infrequency on the subject property. Because the property lies in the Main Cantonment area of the installation, few animals are found on the property, and will not be affected due to neither the leasing action nor the construction of the new Meadows Elementary School. There are no occurrences of threatened or endangered species on the subject property.

Cultural resources were eliminated from further study because no known cultural or historic sites are present on the subject property. The existing Meadows Elementary School was built in 1983 and does not qualify as a historic structure.

#### **3.1 LAND USE**

The subject property is bordered by 31<sup>st</sup> Street on the west and 27<sup>th</sup> Street on the east, 761<sup>st</sup> Tank Battalion Avenue to the north and Tank Destroyer Boulevard on the south. The current land use includes the current Meadows Elementary School on the northeast corner of the property and school-related playground and sports activities surrounding the school building. Outside of school activities, the land is primarily undisturbed.

#### **3.2 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES**

On the subject property, the terrain slopes slowly downward towards the southwest, away from the current Meadows Elementary School. The surrounding landscape includes military family housing and other administrative and recreational facilities. Because the property lies within the Main Cantonment area of the installation, very few visually

appealing sites surround the property. A few native trees dot the landscape, and the immediate block surrounding the school is free of other buildings and other obstructions.

### 3.3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The only geological feature observed on the subject property is a change in elevation, sloping away from the current Meadows Elementary School and dropping as the observer looks southwest. Soils observed on the property are of the Brackett-Topsey association and Slidell silty clay. See Figure 3.1 for locations of the soil types.

Figure 3.1



### 3.4 WATER QUALITY

Although no water bodies exist on the subject property, rain events may cause runoff from the site to end up in nearby waters. The presence of grasses and the lack of nearby water bodies substantially minimizes any impacts to water quality from the current site. Use of the Integrated Pest Management Plan minimizes any impacts to water quality due to use, and runoff, of pesticides when applied near the school.

### 3.5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

#### 3.5.1 Vegetation

The vegetation observed on the subject property is primarily Bermuda grass planted after the area was last disturbed. Trees observed on the subject property include Arizona ash trees that were landscaped along the side of Tank Destroyer Boulevard, two small live

oak trees that were also landscaped in, and one sycamore tree. Arizona ash is not a protected species on Fort Hood.

### 3.6 AIR QUALITY

Fort Hood is located in Bell and Coryell Counties, which are within the Austin-Waco Intrastate Air Quality Control Region (AQCR). Ambient air quality for this area is classified as an unclassifiable attainment area for all critical pollutants. Unclassifiable areas are those areas that have not had ambient air monitoring and are assumed to be in attainment with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Fort Hood, considered a major source for criteria pollutants because of its calculated potential to emit certain criteria pollutants including CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, VOC, and PM<sub>10</sub>, is under the jurisdiction of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region VI and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). It is also currently designated as a major source of hazardous air pollutants; therefore, existing air emission sources are subject to Maximum Achievable Control Technology standards. The TCEQ approved Fort Hood's Title V Federal Operating Permit on October 29, 2001, and currently conducts annual compliance inspections at Fort Hood. The Title V Operating Permit must be renewed every 5 years, and a new permit is in the process of being renewed.

### 3.7 NOISE

Noise levels are computed over a 24-hour period and adjusted for nighttime annoyances to produce the day-night average sound level (DNL). DNL is the community noise metric recommended by the USEPA and has been adopted by most Federal agencies (USEPA 1972; Federal Interagency Committee on Noise 1992). A DNL of 65 dB is the level most commonly used for noise planning purposes and represents a compromise between community impact and the need for activities that do cause noise. Areas exposed to DNL above 65 dB are generally not considered suitable. A DNL of 55 dB was identified by USEPA as a level below which there is no adverse impact (USEPA 1972).

The primary noise sensitive areas near the KISD lease area are residential neighborhoods, administrative areas, and the current Meadows Elementary School. The most common public noise complaints throughout Fort Hood are caused by aircraft, followed by range activity. The complaints are not usually due to the effect of the noise on humans, but instead the effect to livestock spooked by sudden noise who damage facilities or structures (USACE 1999).

### 3.8 SOCIOECONOMICS

The socioeconomic Region of Influence (ROI) of the subject property encompasses a portion of Fort Hood in Bell County, Texas. Bell County is part of the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with a 2003 population of 323,922 (Real Estate Center 2005).

The total population of Bell County was estimated to be 248,727 in 2003. This is a slight increase over the 2002 census population of 245,279 (U.S. Census Bureau [USCB] 2004). The racial mix is mainly comprised of Caucasians (57.3 percent), followed by African-Americans (20.4 percent) and Hispanic or Latino (16.7 percent). The remaining 5.6 percent is split between Asians, American Indians and Alaska natives, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (USCB 2005).

The total number of jobs in Bell County in 2000 was 121,181, a 25 percent increase over the 1990 figure of 96,935 jobs (USCB 2000a, USCB 1990a). The 2000 unemployment rate was 3.7 percent, which is slightly lower than the state unemployment rate of 3.8 percent. Approximately 12.1 percent of the total population lives in poverty. This is slightly less than the estimated 15.4 percent of the state population that lives in poverty (USCB 2000a, USCB 2000b).

The 2002 annual Total Personal Income (TPI) for Bell County was \$6,274,479. Bell County's TPI ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in the state and accounted for 1 percent of the state total. The Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) for Bell County was \$25,581 in 2002. Bell County's PCPI ranked 60<sup>th</sup> in the state and was 88 percent of the state average (\$29,039) and 83 percent of the national average (\$30,906) (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2005).

In 2000 there were 92,782 housing units in Bell County with 85,507 of these houses currently occupied. Approximately 56,282 of the housing units are currently one-unit, detached structures with the rest existing as multi-unit housing, mobile homes, or boat, recreational vehicles, or vans (USCB 2000c).

### 3.9 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE/PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

E.O. 12898 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations", dated February 11, 1994, requires all Federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effect of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Since the project area exhibits a large population of minorities, particularly groups claiming African American and Hispanic or Latino origin and low-income populations, E.O. 12898 will be considered in this EA.

E.O. 13045 "Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks" dated April 21, 1997 requires Federal agencies to identify and address the potential to generate disproportionately high environmental health and safety risks to children. This E.O. was prompted by the recognition that children, still undergoing physiological growth and development, are more sensitive to adverse environmental health and safety risks than adults. Since the project area is located near residential areas and a school where children may be present, E.O. 13045 will be considered in this EA.

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### 3.10 HAZARDOUS AND TOXIC MATERIALS

Hazardous waste, hazardous materials, and toxic substances include those substances defined as hazardous by the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA), Comprehensive Emergency Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), or the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). In general, they include substances that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or toxic characteristics, may present substantial danger to public health or welfare or to the environment when inappropriately released.

Unserviceable materials and used products are managed at the Fort Hood Classification Unit (CU) for in-house users. Contractors are required to provide material safety data sheets (MSDSs) and product labels for all hazardous and toxic materials used during construction on the installation. Further, the contractor should store and dispose of these products in coordination with the Classification Unit on Fort Hood.

### 3.11 UTILITIES

#### **Water Supply**

Potable water on Fort Hood is obtained from the Bell County Water Control Improvement District (BCWCID) #1, which guarantees a delivery of 16.0 million gallons/day (mgd) (USACE 2003). BCWCID #1 obtains its water from Belton Lake. It is anticipated that the new Meadows Elementary School and adjacent land within the lease will continue to use this service for any new facilities.

#### **Sanitary Sewer**

Fort Hood and the City of Killeen are served by Treatment Plants #1 and #2 of the BCWCID #1. Half of Treatment Plant #1's capacity of 15.0 mgd is reserved for Fort Hood. Treatment plant #2 has an additional reserve capacity of 3.0 mgd and adjacent land is available to construct another treatment plant with a capacity of 6.0 mgd (USACE 2003). It is anticipated that the new Meadows Elementary School and adjacent land within the lease will continue to use this service for any new facilities.

#### **Electric Power**

Texas Utilities Electric Company provides electricity to the Fort Hood area through two 138,000-volt transmission lines (USACE 1999). It is anticipated that the new Meadows Elementary School and adjacent land within the lease will continue to use this service for any new facilities.

#### **Natural Gas**

The Lone Star Gas Company provides a guaranteed annual delivery of 8,468 million thousand cubic feet (kcf) to the Fort Hood area (USACE 1999). It is anticipated that the new Meadows Elementary School and adjacent land within the lease will continue to use this service for any new facilities.

## **4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

The Environmental Consequences section assesses the direct and indirect impacts of the lease of land from Fort Hood by KISD, and the subsequent construction of a new Meadows Elementary School. Direct impacts are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. For the purposes of this EA, direct impacts are those caused by the immediate real estate action leasing 15.142 acres to KISD and the subsequent construction of a new Meadows Elementary School on the site. Indirect impacts are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect impacts are those subsequent impacts associated with use or development of the subject properties. Impact are defined as “short-term” (those impacts which would occur prior to or during construction), or “long-term” (those impacts expected to last beyond the duration of construction).

As outlined in the beginning of section 3.0, only those resources that could potentially be impacted as a result of direct or indirect impacts are addressed in the following sections.

### **4.1 LAND USE**

#### **4.1.1 Proposed Action**

Under the Proposed Action, the land use would be very similar as the current land use. However, the current Meadows Elementary School would revert back to Fort Hood use for DOIM. The new Meadows Elementary School would be built on previously undisturbed land, just south of the current school. The new lease area will overlap approximately 8.472 acres of the current lease, and 6.67 acres of the new lease will be newly leased Fort Hood property. The overlapping lease area was primarily used as playgrounds and sports fields, so the area has been somewhat disturbed over the last few years.

Insignificant, long-term impacts to land use would be anticipated as a result of KISD construction activities on the new lease area because a large portion of the parcel would change from open space to campus buildings and/or associated infrastructure; however, the development of this site is consistent with land use of the surrounding area.

#### **4.1.2 No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, the new property lease would not occur and the new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. The current KISD lease would remain in place, and the current Meadows Elementary School would continue to be used as a school rather than being converted to DOIM. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to land use as a result of the No Action Alternative.

## 4.2 AESTHETICS AND VISUAL RESOURCES

### 4.2.1 Proposed Action

This alternative would result in the likely conversion of visual features found at the new lease area from a gently sloping terrain covered in native grasses to a new Meadows Elementary School campus facilities and parking. However, any development that would occur would be consistent with existing development in the immediate area. As a result, no impacts to aesthetics and visual resources would occur.

### 4.2.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to aesthetic and visual resources.

## 4.3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

### 4.3.1 Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, there would be no direct impacts to geology from the proposed lease or construction of a new Meadows Elementary School.

Additionally, there would be no direct impacts to soils resulting from the new lease; however, the construction of a new Meadows Elementary School would have a long-term insignificant impact to soils.

Construction of the new school would involve standard construction activities, including clearing, grading, and paving. Construction activities would be evaluated to determine the erosion potential of the soils, and erosion control designs would be incorporated into construction plans. Increased runoff and erosion would occur during site construction due to removal of vegetation, exposure of soil, and increased susceptibility to wind and water erosion. However, these effects would be minimized by the use of appropriate best management practices for controlling runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. Recommended best management practices to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation include, but are not limited to, silt fences, straw bale (containing native grass species) dikes, diversion ditches, rip-rap channels, water bars, and water spreaders. With the implementation of these best management practices, impacts to soils are expected to be insignificant.

### 4.3.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to geology, topography, or soils as a result of the No Action Alternative.

## 4.4 WATER QUALITY

### 4.4.1 Proposed Action

#### **Storm Water**

Construction of the new Meadows Elementary School on the lease area would have long-term, insignificant effects from increased impervious surface area and a subsequent increase in storm water runoff. Adherence to proper storm water management engineering practices, applicable regulations, codes, and permit requirements, and low-impact development techniques would reduce storm water runoff-related impacts to a level of insignificance. Further, a SWPPP would be required to be submitted to TCEQ before construction of the new Meadows Elementary School could begin.

#### **Wastewater**

There would be a long-term insignificant impact to wastewater from the construction of the new Meadows Elementary School and the associated lease. The BCWCID is capable of treating 21 mgd of wastewater. In an average year, the BCWCID treats 4.4 billion gallons of wastewater. The BCWCID should have adequate capacity to meet future development needs and there should be no significant impacts as a result of implementing the Proposed Action. However, prior to any construction activities, KISD should coordinate with the BCWCID to ensure they have adequate capacity to meet the facility's needs.

### 4.4.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to water quality including storm water and wastewater.

## 4.5 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### 4.5.1 Vegetation

#### 4.5.1.1 Proposed Action

Long-term, insignificant impacts would result on the new lease area from construction activities and would include the direct loss of approximately 5 acres of vegetation. This loss of vegetation would be comprised of landscaped Bermuda grass, and no native tree loss is anticipated. Portions of the project area could be maintained in their current open space state and vegetation would not be disturbed. Alteration of the landscape during construction phases is not anticipated to result in any significant impacts on species diversity or significant impacts to the quality of the vegetative community within the project area.

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#### 4.5.1.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to vegetation in the area.

### 4.6 AIR QUALITY

#### 4.6.1 Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, short-term, intermittent, insignificant effects would be expected within the AQCR as a result of construction of the new Meadows Elementary School. Heavy construction equipment and trucks would emit minor amounts of NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, CO, SO<sub>x</sub>, and VOCs. Although these construction activities would produce dust and particulate matter, these actions pose no significant impact on air quality. Fugitive dust emissions can easily be controlled and minimized by using standard construction practices such as periodically wetting the construction area, covering open equipment used to convey materials, and promptly removing spilled or tracked dirt from streets. Since the proposed land exchange sites are located within an unclassifiable/attainment area for all criteria pollutants, General Conformity Rule requirements are not applicable.

#### 4.6.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to air quality.

### 4.7 NOISE

#### 4.7.1 Proposed Action

Construction activities would increase noise levels temporarily at locations immediately adjacent to the Killeen parcel. Noise levels created by construction equipment would vary greatly depending on factors such as the type of equipment, the specific model, the operation being performed, and the condition of the equipment. The equivalent sound level of the construction activity also depends on the fraction of time that the equipment is operated over the time period of the construction. Heavy equipment such as backhoes and cement and dump trucks would cause short-term, localized, insignificant increases in noise levels during construction.

Most construction activities resulting from this alternative would produce only short-term noise level increases. Construction would occur only during daylight hours, thus reducing the DNLs and the chances of causing annoyances. Since construction would only occur during daylight hours, these short-term increases are not expected to

substantially affect adjacent noise sensitive receptors or wildlife areas. If the use of dynamite, pile drivers, or any extreme noise making device associated with construction were to become prevalent, a noise study and mitigation measures should be considered.

#### 4.7.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to noise.

### 4.8 SOCIOECONOMICS

#### 4.8.1 Proposed Action

The labor for the construction of the new Meadows Elementary School would be provided by local and/or regional contractors, resulting in short-term, insignificant increases in the population of the project area. Materials and other project expenditures would predominantly be obtained through merchants in the local community resulting in direct economic benefits. The proposed new lease and construction of the new Meadows Elementary School would not be expected to increase burdens on local social resources. Safety buffer zones would be designated around all construction sites to ensure public health and safety. No displacement would result from this action and, therefore, there would be no impacts to housing in the area. Consequently, no long-term adverse impacts to socioeconomics are expected.

#### 4.8.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. As a result, there would be no temporary direct benefits from construction through purchasing of construction materials and other project expenditures. Additionally, minor adverse affects would occur due to the minimized educational opportunities for the children living in the area. Children would have to attend a school that is inferior to current standards at KISD.

### 4.9 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE/PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

#### 4.9.1 Proposed Action

##### **Environmental Justice**

Even though minorities account for a large portion of the local population, particularly groups claiming African American and Hispanic or Latino origin and low-income populations, construction of a new Meadows Elementary School is expected to have a

beneficial effect on all populations regardless of race, origin, or income level. The new school would be constructed and operated under the guidelines of E.O. 12898. The proposed project would benefit all populations within the project area by adding increased educational opportunities. The proposed new lease and subsequent construction of the new elementary school would be in compliance with E.O. 12898 and have no impacts on environmental justice.

### **Protection of Children from Health and Safety Risks**

Numerous types of construction equipment such as backhoes, bulldozers, graders, and dump trucks, and other large construction equipment would be used throughout the duration of future construction activities on the new lease site. During construction, safety measures would be followed to protect the health and safety of residents as well as construction workers. Barriers and “No Trespassing” signs would be placed around construction sites to deter children from playing in these areas, and construction vehicles and equipment would be secured when not in use. Since the construction area would be flagged or otherwise fenced, issues regarding Protection of Children are not anticipated.

#### **4.9.2 No Action Alternative**

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to environmental justice or protection of children as a result of the No Action Alternative.

### **4.10 HAZARDOUS AND TOXIC MATERIALS**

#### **4.10.1 Proposed Action**

Short-term insignificant impacts to hazardous and toxic materials would be expected as a result of construction activities on the new lease area. The area is undeveloped and potentially hazardous materials would likely be on-site during construction such as paints, asphalt, fuels, and motor oils for construction vehicles. Persons working with or near fresh paint and asphalt should protect themselves by wearing appropriate clothing, washing their hands before eating or smoking, and bathing at the end of each workday. Construction equipment that could be used contains fuel, lubricating oils, hydraulic fluid, and coolants that could be a regulated hazardous substance if they spilled or leaked on the construction site. The construction contractors would be responsible for the prevention of spills of paint and fuels. Spills could be prevented by proper storage and handling of these materials, attention to the task at hand, and safe driving.

During construction activities, vehicle and equipment would be inspected to ensure correct and leak-free operation, and maintenance activities would not be conducted on the site. Appropriate spill containment material would be kept on site. All fuels and other materials that would be used will be contained in the equipment or stored in appropriate

containers. All materials would be removed from the site upon completion of construction activities.

Some materials, while essentially inert under normal conditions, can be potentially hazardous in specific circumstances. Wood and dry concrete can generate airborne particulate as they are cut or sanded. To protect against the impacts of such particulates, workers should wear face masks and safety glasses when performing these tasks. Wood and other construction materials are also flammable. Establishing dedicated smoking areas and prohibiting open flames near flammable materials would greatly reduce the risk of fire.

#### 4.10.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to hazardous and toxic materials as a result of the No Action Alternative.

### 4.11 UTILITIES

#### 4.11.1 Proposed Action

Water, sewer, electrical, and gas lines would have to be installed in the project area. Prior to any construction activities, KISD should coordinate with the appropriate utility suppliers and transportation officials to ensure they have capacity to incorporate the new school facilities into the required systems.

#### 4.11.2 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the new lease would not occur and a new Meadows Elementary School would not be constructed. There would be no impacts, either beneficial or adverse, to utilities as a result of the No Action Alternative.

### 4.12 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQ regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA require Federal agencies to consider the cumulative impacts of a proposal (40 CFR 1508.25(c)). A cumulative impact on the environment is the impact that results from the incremental impact of an action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions (40 CFR 1508.7). This type of an assessment is important because significant cumulative impacts can result from several smaller actions that by themselves do not have significant impacts.

There are two known projects planned for construction near the proposed lease area and new Meadows Elementary site. First, a new housing expansion is planned on the site where the Anderson Golf Course was located. The course has been closed, and approximately 232 housing units are planned to be located on the site. The project is planned to begin by 2010.

The Anderson Golf Course housing addition will have an impact on the number of students at Meadows Elementary School, since this housing addition will be located in the Meadows school district. Student population is anticipated to increase as a result of the new housing. However, the new Meadows Elementary School plans have taken into account the possible increase of students.

Second, a pedestrian overpass is planned to cross Tank Destroyer Boulevard just south of the proposed lease area and new Meadows Elementary School site. The pedestrian overpass will allow children access to Meadows Elementary School without crossing the busy traffic on Tank Destroyer Boulevard. This project is in the initial planning stages; therefore, there are no specific timelines as to when the project will be completed.

These two projects planned in the area are not anticipated to have cumulative significant impacts on resources in the area surrounding project area.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

Based on this EA, there would be no direct impacts on the environment associated with the lease of 15.142 acres; however, there will be insignificant adverse impacts associated with the construction of the new Meadows Elementary School. Approximately 5 acres of open space would be converted to urban use. Long-term, insignificant adverse impacts to land use, soils, storm water, waste water, and vegetation are anticipated. Short-term, insignificant adverse impacts to air quality, noise, hazardous materials, and socioeconomics due to construction activities are anticipated. Long-term beneficial impacts to environmental justice and protection of children are anticipated.

Therefore, no significant impact on human health or the natural environment is anticipated from the Proposed Action. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) is warranted and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for this action.

## **6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

### **6.1 AGENCY COORDINATION**

This section discusses consultation and coordination that have and will occur during preparation of this document. This would include contacts that are made during the development of the alternatives and writing of the EA. Formal and informal coordination will be conducted during the draft phase with the following agencies:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Texas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- Killeen ISD (KISD)

### **6.2 PUBLIC REVIEW**

The Draft EA and FNSI will be available for public review for a period of 30 days, beginning March 6, 2006 through April 7, 2006. The Notice of Availability (NOA) will be published in the Killeen Daily Herald. The purpose of this review is to ensure that significant issues are resolved. The documents can be viewed on the following website: <http://www.dpw.hood.army.mil/HTML/PPD/Pnotice.htm>. Copies have also been provided to the Killeen Public Library at 205 East Church Avenue, Killeen, Texas, 76541. Comments on the EA and FNSI should be submitted no later than April 7, 2006 to: U.S. Army, HQ III Corps and Fort Hood, Attn: IMSW-HOD-PWE, Building 4219, 77<sup>th</sup> Street and Warehouse Avenue, Fort Hood, TX 76544-5028, Attn: Amber Preston, (phone 254-288-5462).

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## **8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS**

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